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NSC BRIEFING

17 September 1959

DE GAULLE'S PROPOSALS FOR ALGERIA

- I. De Gaulle's proposals for Algerian solution, timed to take international heat off France in UN, have double-barrelled objective:
 - A. To isolate rebels in international opinion and to discredit them among Algerian Moslems as intransigent obstacles to reasonable solution.
 - B. At the same time, to under French rightists and army elements who are opposed to any so-called liberal solution.
- II. De Gaulle took calculated risk vis-a-vis Army in offering self-determination:
 - A. Hedged it with promise of continued military pacification until no more than 200 killed annually.
 - B. Nevertheless, De Gaulle appears confident he has sufficient military backing.
 1. Challe has pledged army support against extremist outbreaks in Algeria:
 2. Soustelle has assured De Gaulle of his support.
- III. Stress De Gaulle laid on middleway of federal-type autonomy indicates his preference for this as most realistic of three solutions he offered.
 - A. Option of independence was accompanied by warnings of ensuing chaos and clear statement Saharan riches will remain under French control no matter what.

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- B. Option of integration is sop to rightists and some army elements who believe Algerians can be persuaded to vote for it.
- IV. Immediate reaction from middle-of-road French political leaders, from Mollet to Reynaud, has been quite favorable.
 - A. De Gaulle took precaution of appealing directly to Mollet for prompt expression of public support from Socialists.
- V. Rebels, to whom De Gaulle again offered nothing except "peace of the brave," are expected to denounce the plan as unilateral action taking no account of them as leading Algerian representatives.
 - A. Offer of independence-by-referendum option to Algerian masses puts rebels on the spot. They had previously expressed concern French might make attractive offer prior to any UN resolution on Algeria.
- VI. Although De Gaulle proposals may undercut support for rebels over long term, no signs of rebel capitulation in near future.
 - A. War will continue: French dead now running about 30 per week, (1500 a year) rebels perhaps ten times as many.